



Lynnfield Historical Commission Annual Report, 2009

The Lynnfield Historical Centre at 35 South Common opened officially in November of 2009 with an enthusiastic and appreciative crowd in attendance at its dedication. As a resource center open by appointment, the Historical Centre will provide public access to its archives as well as information for updating both historic and non-historic homes. The Centre also houses offices for both the Historical Commission and Historical Society.

A small museum management software package, *PastPerfect*, was purchased by the Commission as an aid to cataloguing the textiles, books, documents and photographs, oral histories, personal objects and furniture that comprise the collection of the Historical Society. Using the proper techniques and correct archival materials facilitates the ability of the Society to obtain grants for the preservation of these archives. A small collection of significant objects are now on temporary display in the Centre.

Commemorative granite markers were placed in Freeman-Cox Park and West Cemetery along with a granite bench at the Historical Centre, all donated by Olde New England Granite. An engraving of the Perkins House will be inscribed on the monument in West Cemetery and three donated monument markers from the Perkins family attached along with plaques for the Freeman-Cox marker and the Historical Centre bench. All will be dedicated in the spring of 2010. A badly needed sign and post will be installed at the driveway designating the location of the Historical Centre.

The Gravestone Conservation Project continues as professional conservationist Jonathan Appell works to finish Olde Burying Ground and move on to the next cemetery.

The Bancroft-Danforth House received minor repairs and weather protection to prevent further deterioration after the assessment that it is a very significant historic structure by restoration architect, John Goff.

A list of structures built through 1910 and therefore affected by the Demolition Delay By-Law is being adjusted and will soon be posted on the Historical Commission page of the town website, along with the existing link to the By-law.

The Community Preservation Act failed to pass on the April 2009 town ballot.

The Commission joined the *American Association for State and Local History* (AASLH) and the *National Alliance of Preservation Commissions* (NAPC). The mission of the AASLH is to provide leadership and support for its members who preserve and interpret state and local history in order to make the past more meaningful to all Americans. NAPC provides technical support and

manages an information network to help local commissions accomplish their preservation objectives. The Alliance also serves as an advocate at federal, state and local levels of government to promote policies and programs that support preservation commission efforts.

The Commission was contacted by EBI Omnipoint concerning the telecommunications facility at the Centre Congregational Church, Sage Environmental concerning the T-Mobile cell tower at the Messiah Lutheran Church, and Vanesse Hagen Brustlin with proposed improvements to the Walnut Street Intersection.

Workshops attended this year included *Library Materials Evaluation* presented by NMRLS, and an on-line workshop, *Archives Alive*, through the American Association of State and Local History.

The Historical Commission presented its first annual awards for preservation. The *Perkins Preservation Award* for conservation of a significant structure was presented to Bill Thompson and Francis Fleming, and to Mark Ingaciola. *Spirit of Lynnfield Awards* for maintaining the integrity of important historical properties in the fabric of their neighborhoods were awarded to Joe Cerniglia and Richard Connor, and to Olde New England Granite for their generous donation of granite and time. The *Donald Harriss Initiative Award* recognizing dedicated volunteers whose outstanding commitment of time and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated, was presented to Steven Richard and Donald Harris for their many hours and years of hard work, Mark Meehl for the donation of the hard drive and monitor, Karen Welter for beginning to catalog books in the archives collection, and Kyle Shinnick for cleaning up the Historical Centre grounds.

Volunteers are always welcome at the Historical Centre. Still needed are a new roof on the small storage barn, help with collection management, and gravestone cleaning in any of the four town cemeteries.

The Commission is looking forward in 2010 as it begins the *Spoken History Project*, a compilation of oral histories narrated by local citizens. We will be continuing to add to the inventory historic structures and contribute updates to the *State Reconnaissance Survey Reports*. The Historical Society and Commission will begin to collaborate on plans for the Tri-Centennial Celebration of our Historic Meeting House in 2014.

As a final note, this last paragraph is from the Mass Historical Commissions *State Reconnaissance Survey Reports* first completed in 1986. To access a very interesting history of Lynnfield, click on the link found on this website, scroll down to and click on *Town Reports* and find *Lynnfield* alphabetically.

Lynnfield's inventory of forms focuses exclusively on the town's buildings constructed prior to the Civil War. Between 1940 and 1975, the town's population increased over 400%, and such growth continues unabated. An affluent suburb of Greater Boston, Lynnfield claims few commercial structures or industries. It is residential building that has transformed the once agricultural town. In the north, and intermingled with extant Colonial and Federal period dwellings on the old farmlands, are rapidly escalating numbers of elite residences on large lots. *At every turn of the road, a new neighborhood is being carved out of Lynnfield's remaining unoccupied forested and/or agricultural lands... It is Lynnfield's ensembles, rural dwellings in their original agricultural contexts that are likely the town's most threatened historic commodity. If residential building continues at its present pace, their future appears in extreme jeopardy.*

Some punctuation and italics are mine. Please note that Lynnfield has lost five of these historic homes as the Commission works to preserve the important story of our town.

Respectfully Submitted
Nan Hockenbury, Chair